

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 3-7 are pending in the application, with Claims 3 and 6 being independent. Claims 1 and 2 previously have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 5 and 7 have been amended. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added.

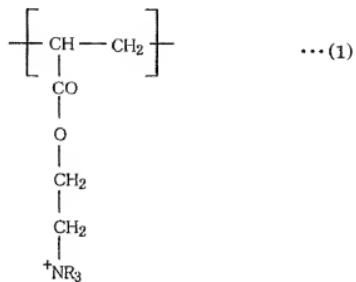
In the Office Action, Claims 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner suggested that it was unclear whether the vinyl copolymer is in the ratio of 0.2 percent by mass to 20 percent by mass of the recording sheet, the fibers, or the sizing agent. Without conceding the propriety of the rejection, Applicant has amended Claims 5 and 6 to recite that the vinyl copolymer is in the ratio of 0.2 percent by mass to 20 percent by mass of the sizing agent. Applicant submits that Claims 5 and 6 fully comply with the requirements of § 112, second paragraph.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112, second paragraph, rejection are requested.

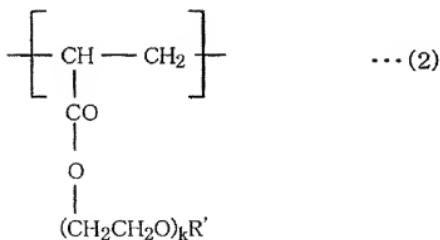
Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) or (e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0212183 (Struck et al.). Claims 3-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,465,078 (Kawai et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,712,027 (Ali et al.). These rejections are traversed.

Applicant's invention, as recited in independent Claim 3, is directed to a recording sheet including fibrous pulps, fillers, and a sizing agent. The sizing agent includes a vinyl copolymer having a repeating unit (i) represented by general formula (1) and a repeating

unit (ii) represented by general formula (2), the ratio by mass, (i):(ii), of the repeating unit (i) to the repeating unit (ii) being 60:40 to 90:10:

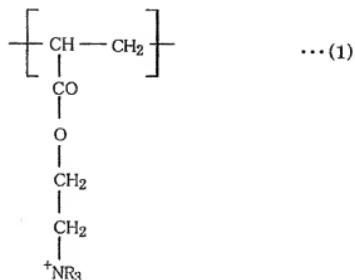


wherein R represents an alkyl group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and the alkyl group may be branched;

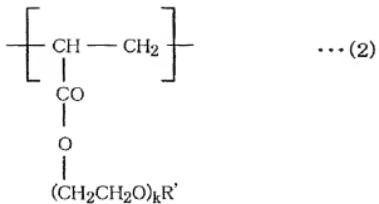


wherein R' represents an alkyl group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, the alkyl group may be branched, and k represents a real number of 1 to 3. The vinyl copolymer has a weight-average molecular weight of about 20,000 to 60,000.

Applicant's invention, as recited in independent Claim 6, is directed to a process for producing a recording sheet including fibrous pulps, fillers and a sizing agent. The process includes a step of applying the sizing agent to a base paper. The sizing agent includes a vinyl copolymer having a repeating unit (i) represented by general formula (1) and a repeating unit (ii) represented by general formula (2), the ratio by mass, (i):(ii), of the repeating unit (i) to the repeating unit (ii) being 60:40 to 90:10:



wherein R represents an alkyl group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and the alkyl group may be branched;



wherein R' represents an alkyl group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, the alkyl group may be branched, and k represents a real number of 1 to 3. The vinyl copolymer has a weight-average molecular weight of about 20,000 to 60,000, and the content of the vinyl copolymer is in the ratio of 0.2 percent by mass to 20 percent by mass of the sizing agent.

Rejection under § 102

Struck et al. is directed to a process for preparing a polymer dispersion. As the Examiner has previously acknowledged, for example at page 5 of the Office Action mailed August 9, 2005, Struck et al. fails to teach or suggest a recording sheet formed using the copolymer recited in independent Claim 3 of the subject application. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Struck et al. fails to teach or suggest, at least, a recording sheet including fibrous pulps, fillers, and a sizing agent comprising a vinyl copolymer having a repeating unit (i) represented by general formula (1) and a repeating unit (ii) represented by general formula (2), the ratio by mass, (i):(ii), of the repeating unit (i) to the repeating unit (ii) being 60:40 to 90:10, as recited in independent Claim 3 of the subject application.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejection.

Rejection under § 103

Kawai et al. is directed to a recording sheet with an ink absorbing layer. Kawai et al. discloses that the ink absorbing layer may comprise (1) a cationic polymer containing a crosslinking monomer as a comonomer unit, (2) a cationic polymer containing a crosslinking monomer and a hydrophilic monomer as comonomer units, or (3) the cationic polymers (1) and (2) and a hydrophilic monomer. Applicant notes that each option (1), (2) and (3) requires the presence of the crosslinking monomer. Applicant does not understand any of the crosslinking monomers disclosed in Kawai et al. to correspond to the monomers having general formula (1) or (2) recited in independent Claims 3 and 6 of the subject application. The Examiner suggests that the compounds disclosed in Ali et al. may be substituted for the hydrophilic monomers disclosed in Kawai et al.. However, assuming *arguendo* that the proposed combination is proper, the proposed combination of Kawai et al. and Ali et al. would still require the presence of the crosslinking monomer. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the proposed combination of Kawai et al. and Ali et al. fails to teach or suggest at least a vinyl copolymer having a repeating unit (i) represented by general formula (1) and a repeating unit (ii) represented by general formula (2), the ratio by mass, (i):(ii), of the repeating unit (i) to the repeating unit (ii) being 60:40 to 90:10, as recited in Claims 3 and 6 of the subject application.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the cited references fail to teach or suggest many features of Applicants' claimed invention. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejection are requested.

Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 3 and 6. Dependent Claims 4, 5 and 7 are also allowable, in their own

right, for defining features of the invention in addition to those recited in the independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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